

TOP 10

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, we have been desperately trying to find out what the Democrat plan to save Medicare was. I have it in my hands here. I have discovered it, the 10 top ways the Democrats plan to save Medicare.

First of all, No. 10: Blame it on the Republicans. No. 9: If at first you don't succeed, raise taxes. No. 8: Medicare and don't worry about the truth while you are doing it. No. 7: Don't ask, don't tell. No. 6: Blame Ken Starr. No. 5: Deny, deny, deny. No. 4: Check the fingerprints on the trustees' report. No. 3: Blame the rich. No. 2: Charge it. And the No. 1 solution of the Democrats to saving Medicare is: Let it go broke, no one will notice.

CUTS IN MEDICARE FOR TAX
BREAK FOR THE WEALTHY

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, we have seen the Republicans do everything they can to divert the public's attention for what their plan would do to Medicare. In order to save Medicare, the Republicans tell us they have to take away senior citizens' choice of doctors; they have to force them into managed care, where they do not want to go, where they lose control of their health care for themselves and for their spouse. They want them to pay the overcharges for doctors who charge them too much for medical procedures. They want to take away their right to have a Medigap insurance policy so they will not have to pay out-of-pocket charges to those same doctors and hospitals, maybe now forcing them to pay as much as 40 percent in out-of-pocket charges.

And they want to do all that for simply one reason, and that is to gather up the resources of Medicare and give a tax break to the wealthy, not gathering up the resources of Medicare to shore up the system, to bolster the system, to make it solvent, but to take away these resources, to take away the money of the senior citizens, to charge them more, to simply transfer that to a tax cut.

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There is another way. The other way is the way President Clinton proposed, which is to shore this system up for 10 years.

MEDICARE TRUSTEES REPORT

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, the Medicare trustees, including three Clinton Cab-

net officials, have released their annual report. It is 3 months late and the diagnosis is not good. The part A trust fund is going to be bankrupt in 2001, a full year earlier than was reported last year. Those are the facts. Interestingly enough, this report came just days after the Senate minority leader and a top Clinton Cabinet official accused Republicans of playing politics with Medicare.

It is serious, folks. We have a problem. Mr. Speaker, during my work on the Kerry commission I saw firsthand the consequences of failing to reform Medicare. I was also pleased to work in a bipartisan fashion with colleagues on both sides of the aisle trying to find a long-term solution for this problem. Responsible people did.

Last year Congress sent that responsible solution of real Medicare reform to the President, and the President vetoed it. I say that it is time for the President to stop the medicare, stop the medigogery, encourage the people in his party on that side of the aisle to stop doing it and get to responsible solutions. We have one. We need to identify it and we need it now.

DEGRADING ACCUSATION

(Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, we should be discussing Medicare, but sometimes decency requires us to deal with unpleasantness. The unpleasantness in this case is an outrageous, inaccurate, degrading accusation by Speaker GINGRICH about the late Ron Brown. Speaker GINGRICH, in what is apparently an organized Republican effort to divert this campaign from discussing the real issues into the kind of negative attacks that maybe they think is the only way they can win, outrageously suggested to a Republican campaign gathering that the President and others delayed the announcement of Secretary Brown's death so that they could engage in some manipulations at his office. It is a lie. The Speaker, when asked, could provide no justification for it.

In fact, we are told in today's paper by the Speaker's press secretary that the justification is that there might be subsequent facts. That is a fairly outrageous standard. Make a terrible accusation and then look and hope for subsequent facts.

Mr. Speaker, I know it is a tough year for the Republican Party. But nothing justifies libeling the dead. Please apologize to the Ron Brown family.

MEDICARE TRUSTEES REPORT

(Mr. BAKER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BAKER of California. Mr. Speaker, in this fantasy land known as Washington, the truth is rarely heard. As

the little rabbit said in "Alice in Wonderland," things are not as they appear. So when the Medicare trustees, these well-known conservatives such as Labor Secretary Reich, Health Secretary Shalala and Treasury Secretary Rubin got up and said Medicare is going broke, an advanced copy went to the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT]. He stood up and said, it is all the Republicans' fault. How could that be? How could that possibly be when we have not passed it?

One of the speakers earlier said today hospitals in my area are closing, in anticipation of our plan which has not even gotten out of the House and has not been signed by the President.

What does Medicare really need? This is the Medicare report from the trustees. One year ago they said it was going to go broke in 2002. The top line. Now they are saying it is going to go broke in 2000. Folks, by the year 2001, it will be \$85 billion under water. That is not because somebody has given somebody a tax break.

What does the Republican plan do? It allows doctors and hospitals to directly provide services. It allows HMO's to provide services, allows people to have a medical savings account. It eliminates waste, fraud, and abuse through tort reform and allows seniors to stay where it is. Let us pass reform. Let us stop blaming each other. Let us save Medicare.

ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE LATE
RON BROWN

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, it was 2 months ago this week that Ron Brown and 34 others were killed in a tragic plane crash in Bosnia. For 2 awful days the world waited to hear the word of their fate. Most of us spent that time praying for a miracle. When word of the tragedy came, the outpouring of love and affection across this country was absolutely breathtaking.

But now the Speaker of the House has weighed in with words of venom. Where most people see tragedy, the Speaker sees only coverup. His press secretary backed his words up by calling for an investigation. During times of tragedy, we should respect each other, not tear each other apart. Only someone who loses the public debate would stoop to desperation tactics like this. This is beneath the dignity of the House and the dignity of this great country.

If NEWT GINGRICH has even a shred of decency left, he should apologize not only to the friends and family of those who were killed but to the American people.

MEDICARE IS GOING BROKE

(Mr. SCARBOROUGH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)